

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims, in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. – 26. (Cancelled)

27. (New) A method of treating an individual, comprising:
providing a blocking element;

inserting the blocking element in a lung passageway of the individual so that the blocking element prohibits air from flowing past the blocking element in an inhalation direction within the lung passageway and also prohibits air from flowing past the blocking element in an exhalation direction within the lung passageway; and

releasing the blocking element in the lung passageway.

28. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the blocking element is inserted in the lung passageway in a compressed state and expands into engagement with a wall of the lung passageway.

29. (New) The method of claim 28, wherein the blocking element expands into sealing engagement with the lung passageway to form an air tight seal between the blocking element and a wall of the lung passageway.

30. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the blocking element comprises a securing element that is expandable to a shape suitable for engaging a wall of the lung passageway.

31. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the blocking element is inserted in the lung passageway in a compressed state and expands into engagement with the wall of the lung passageway.

32. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the blocking element comprises a substantially cylindrical plug of biocompatible material.

33. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein the plug comprises resiliently deformable closed-cell foamed plastics material.

34. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the securing element comprises a stent.

35. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the securing element comprises a memory metal which is released to an expanded shape by a change in a physical parameter after it has been inserted in the lung passageway.

36. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the blocking element comprises a balloon or a diaphragm.

37. (New) The method of claim 27, further comprising:
inserting a delivery tube into the lung passageway, the delivery tube loaded with the blocking element; and
guiding the delivery tube to a suitable location within the lung passageway prior to releasing the blocking element.

38. (New) The method of claim 37, wherein the blocking element is released by pushing the blocking element out of the delivery tube.

39. (New) The method of claim 27, further comprising:
providing a second blocking element;
inserting the second blocking element in a second lung passageway of the individual so that the second blocking element prohibits air from flowing past the second blocking element in an inhalation direction within the second lung passageway and also prohibits

air from flowing past the second blocking element in an exhalation direction within the second lung passageway; and

releasing the second blocking element in the second lung passageway.

40. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the method is for treating an individual having a lung disease.

41. (New) The method of claim 40, wherein the lung disease is emphysema.

42. (New) An apparatus for blocking air flow through a lung passageway into a portion of a human or animal lung, the apparatus comprising:

a securing element that engages a wall of the lung passageway to secure the apparatus therein; and

a blocking element attached to the securing element, wherein the blocking element prevents air from flowing past the apparatus in an inhalation direction and also prohibits air from flowing past the apparatus in an exhalation direction.

43. (New) The apparatus of claim 42, wherein the blocking element comprises a substantially cylindrical plug of biocompatible material.

44. (New) The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the plug comprises resiliently deformable closed-cell foamed plastics material.

45. (New) The apparatus of claim 42, wherein the securing element comprises a stent.

46. (New) The apparatus of claim 42, wherein the securing element comprises a memory metal which is released to an expanded shape by a change in a physical parameter after it has been inserted in the lung passageway.

47. (New) The apparatus of claim 42, wherein the blocking element comprises a balloon or a diaphragm.

48. (New) The apparatus of claim 42, wherein the blocking element is between about 5 mm and about 25 mm in length and about 5 mm and about 11 mm in diameter in an expanded state.

49. (New) A method of treating an individual, comprising:
inserting a material in a lung passageway of the individual so that the material prohibits air from flowing through the lung passageway in an inhalation direction and also prohibits air from flowing through the lung passageway in an exhalation direction; and
releasing the material in the lung passageway.